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ABSTRACT

Results of a national survey of schools and departments of education, undertaken in 1981 by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education on attitudes of teacher educators on extended teacher education programs, indicated a general skepticism about their effectiveness. A similar survey was conducted of educators in Texas. A five-item, open-ended questionnaire, sent to the heads of 61 teacher education programs in Texas, received a response from two-thirds of the institutions. Despite the expression of many doubts and anxieties, with somewhat more coming from church-related institutions, there appeared to be more openness to the idea of extended teacher education in Texas than was found in the national survey. There has been more discussion of the concept in Texas institutions than in the national sample. One large state university is now beginning a five-year teacher education program, two land-grant institutions reported serious investigation of an extended program model, and several other institutions reported examinations of a five-year program, though none had any plans to implement one. (JD)

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on
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SP 024 133

Extended Teacher Education Programs: A Survey of Attitudes in Texas

Thomas E. Baker Austin College

I. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to investigate attitudes toward extended teacher education programs in schools, colleges, and departments of education in Texas. A similar national survey by the AACTE Task Force on Extended Programs will be summarized briefly. Results of the Texas survey will be presented and discussed.

II. Background

During the past few years, criticism of public education in the United States has often focused on the education of teachers. A few voices in the profession have called for extended programs in teacher education as a means of preparing more qualified professional teachers (Howsam, 1976; Freeman and Love, 1971; Andrew, 1981; Smith, 1980). Early in 1981, AACTE created the Task Force on Extended Teacher Education Programs whose charge was to "stimulate study and discussion of extended models for initial teacher education programs among members and state associations." (AACTE, 1983, p. 39) One result of the Task Force's work was the publication of Educating a Profession: Extended Programs in Teacher Education (1983), a booklet that discusses a number of extended program models, their advantages and disadvantages, and generally argues the case for extended programs. As a concluding acts before disbanding in 1984, the Task Force

surveyed a sample of 103 member institutions' SCDEs to examine "exactly how the preparation arm really feels about the concept." (Monohan, 1983, p. 2) While only 36 institutions responded, about 33%, 1983 Task Force Chairman William Monohan noted wryly that this is at least "more of a cross-section of opinion and view than we have had previously." (p.4) In his final report, Monohan summarized responses to the five-item, open-ended questionnaire. Following is a brief review of his summary (pp.4-9).

Question 1. Has there been discussion in your faculty of the idea of extended programs and how would you characterize its flavor?

There was little discussion reported, regardless of institutional type or size. The general attitude was mixed. There was more interest at public, non-landgrant institutions, least among private universities, and the most anxiety among independent and church-related liberal arts colleges.

Question 2. Has there been reaction from the "field" and, if so, how could it be characterized?

There was little perception of any reaction to extended programs from practitioners or state associations of teacher education institutions. "The character of reaction from the field has been," said Monohan, "first of all, negligible, and second, of what there has been, generally uninformed." (p.5)

Question 3. If your institution were to consider such a program, what are some of the major problems forseen?

Responses varied widely, but generally dealt with problems of resources, timing, programmatic difficulties within the institution, problems of articulation, cost, and the

problem of asking students and parents to take on extra expense while pay-offs seem problematic.

Question 4. What is your own point of view about extended programs?

For those respondents who understand the concept (some thought the task force was asking about off-campus extension programs), the feeling seems to be cautiously negative. While they may believe the idea has merit, they do not see extended programs as feasible at this time. The most support was found among public, non-land-grant institutions, while public land-grant and church-related liberal arts institutions were most likely to consider extended programs a bad idea.

Question 5. What should AACTE's position be?

Generally, respondents felt AACTE should observe and report on the few extended programs now operating or beginning operation, lend qualified support, but primarily monitor rather than advocate.

In his interpretive comments, Monohan observes," -- the overall view is cautiously skeptical and is terribly cluttered with the expected suspicions of a profession caught up in a period of anxiety over enrollments, purposes, and public pressures relating to overall performance." (p.6)

III. Procedures

In an attempt to assess attitudes toward extended teacher education programs in the SCDEs of Texas, a five-item, open-ended questionnaire was sent to the heads of sixty-one approved teacher education programs in Texas. It was decided to exclude

the investigator's institution from the survey. That college's teacher education component has operated only an integrated, five year teacher certification program for the past thirteen years. An initial mailing yielded a return of 35 questionnaires, or 57.4%. A follow-up mailing raised the total response to 41, or 67.2%. While a higher return would have been desirable, a response from two-thirds of those surveyed is certainly a more encouraging proportion than that of the national sample surveyed by the AACTE Task Force. In a cover letter with the questionnaire, "extended program" was defined simply as " -- one that takes more than the traditional four years to complete." The questionnaire was based on the AACTE Task Force one, but some wording changes were made, as can be seen in the following discussion. Institutions were categorized as Land-Grant Institutions, Public Non-Land-Grant Institutions, Church-Related Colleges, Church-Related Universities, or Independent Universities. The respondent was asked to indicate the appropriate category for his or her institution. Since the directory used for this survey (Approved Programs in Texas Colleges and Universities for the Preparation of Teachers, Texas Education Agency) classifies institutions only as state supported or independent, non-respondents could be categorized only as one or the other. The following table shows the number of responses.

TABLE 1.	Contacted	Responded
State supported	30	21 = 70.0%
Independent	31	20 = 64.5%

(One state's and two independents' arrived too late to be counted.)

IV. Results

In this section, responses to each question will be presented in tabular form where appropriate, and the comments of respondents will be summarized.

Question 1. Has your faculty discussed the idea of extended programs? If so, how would you characterize the quantity and flavor of those discussions?

Unlike the national sample in the AACTE Task Force survey, the majority of respondents (27 = 65.9%) report that their faculties have discussed extended programs, albeit to varying degrees. Only 14 (34.1%) reported no discussion. When asked to characterize the nature of such discussions, respondents answered in a variety of ways and with a number of asides, digressions, and personal opinions. However, responses could be categorized according to the following table.

TABLE 2.

	Land-Grant Institution	Public Non-Land-Grant	Church-related College	Church-related University	Independent University/	TOTAL
POSITIVE	1	3	3			7
NEGATIVE		3	7	2	1	13
NO DISCUSSION		9	1	4		14
MIXED	1	4	1	1		7

Of those institutions where the education faculty has discussed extended programs, approximately half are apparently against the idea, with only a quarter expressing positive attitudes toward extended programs. It is interesting to note that almost

half of the positive responses are from church-related colleges. At the same time, however, more than twice as many church-related colleges have negative rather than positive feelings about extended programs. Although the small number of respondents militates against firm generalizations, it seems that the education faculties of church-related colleges are more likely to have discussed extended programs and formed a perceptibly unified opinion. Independent institutions on the whole reported a higher proportion of discussion and a higher degree of opposition to extended programs than did state supported institutions.

TABLE 3

	State Supported	Independent
POSITIVE	4	3
NEGATIVE	3	10
NO DISCUSSION	9	5
MIXED	5	2

While many respondents reported only limited discussions, almost as many indicated that frequent, protracted discussions of extended programs had taken place. Comments ranged from the skeptical ("If students aren't ready after an intense four year program, they won't benefit from additional work,") to the euphoric ("It would solve all the problems of the profession,") to the resigned ("More opposition than support, but some resignation that extended programs may be mandated.") One public univeristy reported

the inception of a pilot five-year program. Many of the comments could be characterized as, "Yes, but --."

> The general feeling is that a five year program is superior for producing a better product. Is it enough of a difference, however, that it is justifiable to the student in terms of increased expenditures of time, energy, and money? (Land-Grant Institution)
>
> Frequent discussions; agree that students need longer time, but would be counter productive to our program. (Church-Related College)
>
> Most faculty agree that more time is needed to prepare teachers; however, until salaries become competitive and working conditions improve, an extended program cannot be justified. (Public Non-Land Grant University)

In summary, almost 66% of the responding SCDEs have discussed extended programs with approximately 26% reporting positive attitudes, 26% mixed opinions, and 48% negative attitudes.

Question 2. Have you been aware of reactions to or comments about extended programs from (a) the teacher education "field" (institutions, organizations, contributors to teacher education journals) or (b) others in education (teachers, school administrators, members of governmental agencies and commissions)? If so, what are your perceptions of those comments and reactions?

Only one of the 41 respondents reported no awareness of any comments or reactions about extended programs, and three either failed to answer or gave an ambiguous response. The following table shows how respondents perceive reactions to extended programs from the teacher education field and practitioners. (Few respondents distinguished between part (a) and part (b) of Question 2.)

TABLE 4

Perceive generally positive reactions	9
Perceive generally negative reactions	9
Perceive mixed reactions	8
Ambiguous response, or no perception reported	15

Obviously, these teacher educator's perceptions of reactions to the notion of extended programs are divided. Virtually equal proportions see generally positive reactions, negative reactions, or mixed reactions, while the greatest number did not characterize reactions, or gave a response that could not be categorized. While a number of respondents seemed confident about what others thought of extended programs, many others were more tentative. Perceptions of higher education reactions were more often reported than those of practitioners or state agencies. Three respondents, though, said teachers and the Commission on Standards for the Teacher Profession are against extended programs. One commented that a superintendent he knows prefers graduates of five year programs, while another respondent dismissed school administrators as "realists who function day-to-day and are more interested in local-certification experiments than extended programs on campus." Several commented that smaller, private colleges oppose extended programs while state institutions favor them as a means of increasing their funding. "The profession will never embrace additional initial requirements with so small a carrot on the end of the stick," said the education department chairman at a state university. The head of education at a church-related college sees attitudes as "mixed,

wait and see, but generally favorable. I see no large-scale, deep-seated opposition." From another church-related college, however, we hear a slightly different tone. "The profession is divided -- [It] appears that supporters are contributing to a growing body of literature on the subject and that opponents are remaining silent."

The responses to Question 2 indicate mixed perceptions, at best, of what other educators think of extended programs. If a subjective assertion may be permitted, more than a few comments contained hints of cynicism, suspicion, or anxiety.

Question 3. If your institution were to consider such a program, what are some of the major problems, if any, you forsee? What major advantages, if any, do you forsee?

Nineteen of the forty-one respondents saw no advantages at all if their institutions implemented an extended program, but only seven failed to list any problems associated with such a change. The most commonly mentioned advantages had to do with more time for the study of subject matter and pedagogy, more clinical experience, and the opportunity for a higher-quality, more professional program. Anticipated disadvantages centered on difficulties in recruiting and holding students, expense, and staffing. A few mentioned politics, either institutionally or at the state level, as an obstacle, and one respondent predicted a rise in emergency certification if five-year programs became prevalent. Somewhat surprisingly, only a handful of persons said that program redesign or determining the specifics of an extended program would present problems, and no one mentioned possible

problems with more, longer, and new types of field experiences. There were more responses dealing with problems than advantages, and most of the problems had to do with fears for survival. The following tables enumerate the types of problems and advantages mentioned. The figures represent the number of times each type of comment occurred.

TABLE 5

MAJOR ADVANTAGES

	Land-Grant Inst.	Public Non Land Grant	Church Related College	Church Related Univer.	Indep. Univer.	Total
More and/or better quality time on subject matter		3	1			4
More and/or better quality time on professional education		4	1	1		6
More clinical experience		2	2	1		5
Higher quality product		5	2	1		8
Makes it a professional program	1	3				4
Easier scheduling	1	1		2		4
Other	2	2		2		6
NONE, or NO RESPONSE		8	7	3	1	19

TABLE 6

MAJOR PROBLEMS

	Land-Grant Inst.	Public Non Land Grant	Church Related College	Church Related Univer.	Indep. Univer.	Total
Staffing	1	2	2	2		7
Recruiting; enrollment loss		9	5	4	1	19
Funding	1	3	3	1		8
Other	1	12	1	4		18
NONE, or NO RESPONSE		2	2	3		7

Though there was no lack of problems forseen if a move were made to an extended program, many of them seem idiosyncratic, or otherwise difficult to classify. For example, one opponent of extended programs believes they would "reinforce 'professional students,' those afraid of the world of work." This respondent saw as the only possible advantage of extended programs, "The weaker students now entering teacher education need more time." The bottom line for most respondents was the anticipated difficulty in getting enough students to keep their doors open, or, succeeding at that, to provide adequate faculty and staff to serve them.

Question 4. What is your own opinion about extended programs?

Responses to this question revealed what at first glance seem to be interesting differences between the professed opinions of heads of SCDEs (or their delegates) and their perception of their faculty's attitude toward extended programs. The following tables show those results.

TABLE 7a. Responses To Question 4

	Land-Grant Inst.	Public Non Land Grant	Church Related College	Church Related Univer.	Indep. Univer.	Total
Positive	2	13	3	2		20
Negative		3	4	2	1	10
No response or Ambiguous response		3	4	4		11

TABLE 7b. Response To Question 4

	State Supported	Independent
Positive	15	5
Negative	3	7
No response or Ambiguous response	3	8

In response to Question 4, 48.8% said they are favorably disposed to extended programs, 24.4% opposed them, and 26.8% offered no opinion or gave an ambiguous response. In contrast, in the two-thirds of the institutions where discussion has taken place, 26% reported positive faculty attitude toward extended programs, 26% reported mixed feelings, and 48% reflected a negative attitude toward extended programs. The large gain in positive responses to question 4 comes mainly from heads of state supported institutions who had reported no discussions of extended programs. Apparently, a few heads of education of church-related colleges are more favorably disposed toward extended programs than they perceive their faculties to be, but there is still strikingly less support for extended programs from those at independent institutions than from those at state supported ones. While about half of the responses of the Texas sample to Question 4 are positive, contrary to the "cautiously negative" attitude Monohan found, many responses are hedged with many a "but,"

"only if," and "not unless," and fraught with doubts and anxiety. The chairman of the education department at a church-related college, pointing to the paucity of hard evidence that graduates of five year programs are superior to "graduates of four year programs with one year of classroom experience on the job," goes on to say, "The concept is appealing; the results are uncertain." A number of respondents feel bound by circumstances that they apparently see as beyond their control, but that affect their professional survival. Retorted the education chairman of a public non-land-grant university, "I see no value in extending programs now which are underattended." The department head of church related college spoke for many when he said

> From a professional perspective, an extended program would be desirable. Teachers need to be trained at greater depth than a four year college program permits. But due to low status, low salary, new testing requirements and difficulties in recruiting a sufficient number of qualified students, I am against it at present, until some of the circumstances change.

Some comments even had a wistful note.

> If my world could be redefined, I would opt for a graduate year teacher education program with undergraduate components, field experience, and professional courses to adequately prepare students for the field experience. (Public Non-Land-Grant University)

In summary, it should be remembered that almost half (48.8%) of the respondents said they liked the idea of extended programs, while slightly less than a quarter

(24.4%) flatly opposed the concept. Heads of programs at state-supported institutions were three times more likely than their independent college counterparts to have a positive opinion of extended programs.

Question 5. What should TACTE's position be on extended programs?

The following table summarizes responses to Question 5.

TABLE 8a. TATCE POSITION SHOULD BE

	Land-Grant Inst.	Public Non Land Grant	Church Related College	Chruch Related Univer.	Indep. Univer.	Total
Oppose			2	1	1	4=9.8%
Support	1	7	1	1		10=24.4%
Support only as one option	1	8	4	1		14=34.1%
Investigate		2	1			3=7.3%
Take no stand			2	2		4=9.8%
No response or ambiguous response		2	1	3		6=14.6%

TABLE 8b. TACTE POSITION SHOULD BE

	State Supported	Independent
Oppose		6
Support	8	2
Support only as one option	9	5
Investigate	2	1
Take no stand		4
No response or ambiguous response	2	4

Almost a quarter of the respondents (24.4%) said that TACTE should lend active support to the extended program concept, while only 9.8% (all from independent institutions) think TACTE should take a stand against them. Adding the 34.1% who said TACTE should support extended programs as one option, 58.5% of the respondents believe that TACTE should take a public position that is at least accepting of extended programs. Even some who had expressed skepticism about the feasibility of extended programs thought TACTE should encourage their existence. For example, the education head at a state university said, "TACTE should work to make it a viable option in the state; presently, it clearly is not a clear option." Another public university respondent who had expressed deep skepticism about extended programs nevertheless suggested that TACTE should "examine

[extended programs] and encourage some experimentation." Several respondents, however, warned against the possibility of a mandated, uniform program model.

> Avoid promoting a CBTE-type model--size twelve shoes for everybody! (Public Non-Land-Grant University)

> A specific position by TACTE would continue the greatest error in teacher education: cloning (Church-related college)

To summarize, over half of the respondents thought that TACTE should support extended programs, at least as one option. Almost one-fifth felt TACTE should oppose extended programs or take no stance on them. Compared to the national sample's response to Question 5 regarding AACTE's position on extended programs, the Texas sample appears to be more willing to have TACTE take a definite stand on extended programs, with a slight majority favoring a tepidly supportive to a highly supportive position. Unlike those surveyed by the AACTE Task Force, very few Texas heads (7.3%) proposed a merely investigative, monitoring role for TACTE.

The data for Question 5 are interesting in light of those generated by previous questions. Twenty-six percent of those whose faculties had discussed extended programs (about 17% of the sample) perceived a positive attitude toward extended programs in their institutions, but 24.4%* believe that TACTE should take a clearly supportive position, while an additional 34.1% say TACTE should at least support extended programs as one option. About 32% of the

*of the entire sample

respondents (66% of 48%) saw their faculties as negative toward extended programs, and 24.4% said they personally opposed such programs, yet only 9.8% said TACTE should publicly oppose such programs. Although we should avoid confusing tolerance with advocacy, the data suggests that despite many misgivings about implementing extended programs themselves, a slight majority of SCDE heads in Texas favor a TACTE position that may help pave the way for such programs. One should be sensitive, however, to the fairly sharp discrepancy between state-supported and independent institutions on this issue.

V. Concluding Remarks

Despite the expression of many doubts and anxieties, with somewhat more coming from church-related institutions, there appears to be more openness to the idea of extended teacher education programs in Texas SCDEs than Monohan found accross the nation. Certainly there seems to have been more discussion of the concept in Texas institutions than in the national sample. One large state university is now beginning a pilot five year teacher education program, two land-grant institutions report serious investigation of an extended program model, and several other institutions report thorough examinations of a five year program, though none of those have any plans to implement one. Still, this survey discovered no tidal wave of support for extended programs, and a good deal of hesitancy and skepticism toward them. It seems safe to predict that

for the next few years, there will be only two extended teacher education programs in Texas, one a selective, optional five year program at a state university, the other a five year program that has been in operation since 1971 at a selective church-related liberal arts college.

A difficulty in assessing the responses to this survey is the variety of perceptions of the term "extended program." Although only one respondent refused to comment in the absence of a particular model, it was apparent that different persons held different pictures of the concept. Of those whose perception was discernible, most seemed to be imagining a five year program, leading to a master's degree, with most, but not all, of the professional education coming in the fifth year and including an internship. In very general terms, that model describes the two extended programs extant in Texas. It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss the specifics of extended teacher education programs, but obviously serious consideration of structure, content, and processes are essential for any decision-making about extended programs. It goes without saying that high-quality curriculum, instruction, and supervised clinical experiences are the sine qua non of any teacher education program. Proponents of extended programs argue that to adequately accomodate all elements required for the initial preparation of a professional teacher, more than the traditional four years are required. For a concise but thorough description of seven extended program models, the reader is

referred to Educating a Profession: Extended Programs for Teacher Education, available from AACTE for a nominal charge.

Most objections to extended programs focus on the presumed difficulty in attracting students for an additional year of schooling to enter a low-paying profession whose status and prestige have slipped badly over the years and which suffers almost daily attacks in the press. But can we wait for conditions to improve dramatically while making no dramatic changes in teacher education? One is reminded of the skeptic who observed, "Come weal or woe, the status in quo." Many years ago, a teacher with a few months of post-high school training was the best educated person in the community. Now a bachelor's degree is considered a requirement for entry into a wide array of occupations. The development of the two year normal school, and later, the development of the four year teachers college both occurred during periods of public concern about teacher education (AACTE, 1983). If we really do not believe that we now have a knowledge base about effective teaching -- or if we act as if we do not believe it -- then the day may be carried by those critics who argue that any liberal arts graduate can become a professional teacher merely through on-the-job training. If we do believe that there is an important knowledge base about effective teaching, that teacher education students must have opportunities to acquire, apply and refine that knowledge in clinical settings with adequate time to reflect and inquire, that today's

teachers must be educated both broadly and deeply in the liberal arts as well as in pedagogy, and that teacher education is professional education, then how can we continue to defend a teacher education model that has not changed in sixty years? The change to extended programs will undoubtedly be fraught with difficulties, and many programs understandably fear for their survival. But might we be risking the survival of teacher education itself if we do not move toward extended teacher education programs?

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